

CLAIMS

I claim:

1. A folding tailgate extension comprising a plurality of rectangular panels, wherein the longitudinal edges of said panels are hingedly attached to each other in series.
- 5 2. The folding tailgate extension of claim 1, wherein said panels further comprise locking means.
3. The folding tailgate extension of claim 2, wherein said locking means comprise a receiver and a pin assembly, such that:

10 said receiver further comprises a block fixedly attached to the transverse edge of a first of said panels, said block having holes located in adjacent sides, at least one of said holes being aligned with the transverse edge of said panel, and at least one of said holes being orthogonal to the transverse edge of said panel;

15 said pin assembly further comprises a block fixedly attached to the transverse edge of a second of said panels, said block having holes located in opposite sides, said holes being aligned with the transverse edge of said panel, and a pin extending through said holes, slideably attached by a spring inside of said block;

20 said pin is able to engage said transverse holes in said receiver so that said first and second panels form a plane; and
 said pin is alternatively able to engage said orthogonal holes in said receiver so that said first and second panels form a right angle.

4. The folding tailgate extension of claim 3, wherein said panels are plastic.

5. The folding tailgate extension of claim 3, wherein said panels are metal.
6. The folding tailgate extension of claim 3, wherein said panels are wooden.
7. The folding tailgate extension of claim 1 wherein:
 - said series of panels has at least a first and a last end panel;
 - 5 said first end panel is hingedly attached to a pickup truck tailgate by a mounting bracket and fasteners; and
 - said last end panel has a free end.
8. The folding tailgate extension of claim 7, wherein said panels are capable of being folded in parallel relation to one another inside of a pickup truck tailgate.
- 10 9. The folding tailgate extension of claim 8, wherein said panels, when folded, have substantially the same height as a pickup truck tailgate.
10. A folding tailgate extension comprising a plurality of rectangular panels, wherein:
 - the longitudinal edges of said panels are hingedly attached to each other in series;
 - 15 said series of panels has at least a first and a last end panel;
 - said first end panel is hingedly attached to a pickup truck tailgate by a mounting bracket and fasteners;
 - said last end panel has a free end;
 - said panels are capable of being folded in parallel relation to one another
 - 20 inside of a pickup truck tailgate; and
 - said panels, when folded, have substantially the same height as a pickup truck tailgate.

11. The folding tailgate extension of claim 10, wherein said panels further comprise locking means.
12. The folding tailgate extension of claim 11, wherein said locking means comprise a receiver and a pin assembly, wherein:

5 said receiver further comprises a block fixedly attached to the transverse edge of a first of said panels, said block having holes located in adjacent sides, at least one of said holes being aligned with the transverse edge of said panel, and at least one of said holes being orthogonal to the transverse edge of said panel;

10 said pin assembly further comprises a block fixedly attached to a second of said panels, said block having holes located in opposite sides, said holes being aligned with the transverse edge of said panel, and a pin extending through said holes, said pin being slideably attached by a spring inside of said block;

15 said pin is able to engage said transverse holes in said receiver so that said first and second panels form a plane; and

 said pin is alternatively able to engage said orthogonal holes in said receiver so that said first and second panels form a right angle.

13. The folding tailgate extension of claim 12, wherein said panels are plastic.
- 20 14. The folding tailgate extension of claim 12, wherein said panels are metal.
15. The folding tailgate extension of claim 12, wherein said panels are wooden.
16. A folding tailgate extension comprising three rectangular panels, wherein:

the longitudinal edges of said panels are hingedly attached to each other in series;

said series of panels has at least a first and a last end panel;

said first end panel is hingedly attached to a pickup truck tailgate by a

5 mounting bracket and fasteners;

said last end panel has a free end;

said panels are capable of being folded in parallel relation to one another inside of a pickup truck tailgate;

said panels, when folded, have substantially the same height as a pickup truck tailgate; and

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said panels further comprise locking means, such that said locking means comprises a receiver and a pin assembly, wherein:

said receiver further comprises a block fixedly attached to the

transverse edge of a first of said panels, said block having holes

15 located in adjacent sides, at least one of said holes being aligned

with the transverse edge of said panel, and at least one of said holes

being orthogonal to the transverse edge of said panel;

said pin assembly further comprises a block fixedly attached to the

transverse edge of a second of said panels, said block having holes

20 located in opposite sides, said holes being aligned with the

transverse edge of said panel, and a pin extending through said

holes, slideably attached by a spring inside of said block;

said pin is able to engage said transverse holes in said receiver so that said first and second panels form a plane; and
said pin is alternatively able to engage said orthogonal holes in said receiver so that said first and second panels form a right angle.

- 5 17. The folding tailgate extension of claim 16, wherein:
 said panels constitute a ramp when said locking means are engaged to
 form a plane; and
 said panels constitute a step when said locking means are engaged to form
 a right angle.
- 10 18. The folding tailgate extension of claim 17, wherein said panels are plastic.
19. The folding tailgate extension of claim 17, wherein said panels are metal.
20. The folding tailgate extension of claim 17, wherein said panels are wooden.

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